(b) whether a Committee set up under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission to go into the working of the KVIC has recommended for opening up of new avenues to achieve better business opportunities for improving its financial situation;

(c) if so, the details of the recommendations; and

(d) the decision taken in the matter particularly with regard to the financial health of KVIC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is already promoting various items other than khadi products under village industries programme.

(b) to (d) A High Power Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri K.C. Pant, Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission to suggest suitable measures for strengthening the Khadi and Village Industries (KVI) sector. Based on the recommendations made by the Committee, a package for KVI Sector was announced by the Government on 14.05.2001. The salient features of the package consist of Rebate Policy for five years, options of Rebate and Market Development Assistance (MDA), Insurance cover to Khadi artisans, emphasis on improvement of Khadi products, creation of packaging and design facilities, measures to promote marketing, brand building, cluster development, focus on core areas and provision of additional working capital.

Package for Small Scale Industries Sector

2729. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study group of the Planning Commission has recently recommended substantial package for the small scale industries sector;

(b) if so, the details of the financial pacakge; and

(c) what are the other details of the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The Study Group on Development of Small Scale Enterprises has recommended the creation of funds of:—

(i) Rs. 2000 crores for adequate infrastructure facilities to small scale enterprises;

(ii) Rs. 1000 crores for establishment of Incubation Centres;

(iii) Rs. 5000 crores under technology upgradation and modernisation fund with an interest subsidy of five percent; and

(iv) Rs. 500 crores as a special venture capital type fund named as "Laghu Udyog Nirman Nidhi" for equity support.

The other major recommendations of the study group include a three tier definition for small enterprises, a comprehensive law for the sector including simplification of procedures, continuation of reservation, selective enhancement of investment limit, creation of corpus for infrastructural development and incubation centres, improving flow of credit through raising limit of composite loans, various financial and fiscal measures such as raising of excise exemption limit and other measures, schemes for teachnology upgradation, marketing etc.

Exploitation of Potential of Khadi and Village Industries

2730. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study has been carried out by Government to find out the possibilities of expansion and development of the Khadi and Village Industries in the country as well as in the global market;

(b) if so, the potential of Khadi and Village Industries to step up production and export and also to create additional employment opportunities;

(c) whether Government have any time-bound and target oriented plan to exploit this potential; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (d) A High Power Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri K.C. Pant, Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission to suggest suitable measures for strengthening the Khadi and Village Industries (KVI) sector. Based on the recommendations made by the Committee, a package for 5 years for KVI Sector was announced by the Government on 14.05.2001. The salient features of the package consist of Rebate policy for five years, options of Rebate and Market Development Assistance (MDA), Insurance cover to Khadi artisans, emphasis on improvement of Khadi products, creation of packaging and design facilities, measures to promote marketing, brand building, cluster development, focus on core areas and provision of additional working capital.

India's Status in Space Research

†2731. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is lagging behind in the field of the exploration of space in comparision to other countries;

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.